

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claim 7 is the only claim pending in the application, and is herein amended to be in independent form, and to recite the feature that the ink comprises glycerol or ethylene glycol. Support for this feature may be found in the specification at least at page 20, lines 10-14. Claims 1, 3, 4, 8-11 and 13-15 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter. It is submitted that no new matter has been added by the amendments herein.

Claims 1, 3-4, 7-11 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 55-139471 (JP '471) in view of EP 0 130 789 (EP '789). Claims 1, 3-4, 11, and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Keaveney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,114, 479) in view of EP '789. (It appears that both of these rejections were intended to be obviousness rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.)

Since Claim 7 was not rejected based on the combination of Keaveney et al. and EP '789, it is submitted that this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

Before addressing the merits of the rejection based on JP '471 and EP '789, Applicants believe it will be helpful to review some features and advantages of the present invention. The present invention, as recited in amended independent Claim 7, relates to an ink-jet recording method. The ink comprises a colored resin particle dispersed in an aqueous medium. The colored resin particle comprises an acrylic film-forming resin to which at least one of an oil soluble dye and a disperse dye is sublimed and penetrated. The acrylic film-forming resin has a minimum film-forming temperature of not higher than 35 °C. The ink also comprises

glycerol or ethylene glycol. Applicants note that with this recording method, it is possible to achieve not only excellent scratch-resistance and gas-resistance, but also excellent coloring properties and transparency due to the monomolecular dispersion state of the colorants in the resin. In Applicants' view, the features of the claimed invention are neither taught nor suggested by JP '471 and EP '789.

Applicants note that use of glycerol and/or ethylene glycol as the solvent is preferable for obtaining excellent transparency, because these solvents do not cause haze (deterioration of transparency) in the ink-receiving layer. Although the mechanism is not clear, it is believed that since these solvents are of high boiling point and low vapor pressure, such solvents, which have caused swelling of the binder in the ink-receiving layer, remain in the ink-receiving layer for a long time, so that the optical properties of the ink-receiving layer are unlikely to change. In contrast, when solvents are quickly vaporized, the structure of the ink-receiving layer immediately after recording easily changes after vaporization of the solvents, thereby causing change in optical properties. As a result, the transparency is apt to be adversely affected. Applicants further note that since these solvents act as a moisturizing agent for the resin used in the present invention, on the nozzle surface, film formation (fixation) caused by water evaporation can be prevented, and also, these solvents penetrate into the recording medium and cause separation from the resin to generate film formation of the resin, thereby providing excellent transparency, ozone resistance and scratch resistance, which are among the advantages of the present invention.

Applicants submit that JP '471 does not teach or suggest the claimed solvents. Although EP '789 mentions that the ink may contain glycerol or ethylene glycol (see page 18,

lines 1-6), Applicants note that EP '789 enumerates there many components other than glycerol or ethylene glycol. Moreover, their purpose is simply described as drying property adjustment agents. In Applicants' view, such disclosure cannot be considered to teach or suggest the advantageous effects of the present invention. Applicants therefore take the position that neither JP '471 nor EP '789 teaches or suggests the beneficial effects due to the claimed selection of solvents, and that these references do not render obvious the invention as presently claimed.

Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment After Final be entered. This Amendment could not have been presented earlier as it was earnestly believed that the claims on file would be found allowable. Given the Examiner's familiarity with the application, Applicants believe that a full understanding and consideration of this Amendment would not require undue time or effort by the Examiner. No new claims have been added. Moreover, Applicants submit that this Amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment is believed to be appropriate and such entry is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the cited references do not teach or suggest the invention as presently claimed in independent Claim 7, either singly or in combination, assuming that such combination is proper. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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